

111th Fighter Wing

Sandy Hog

Willow Grove Air Reserve Station

Pennsylvania Air National Guard

December 2007

**Appreciation Celebration recognizes
legislators, employers, local businesses**

Page 10



Photo by Master Sgt. Patrick Cashin

Willow Grove Joint Interagency Installation Implementation Plan Underway

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs selected L. Robert Kimball & Associates, of Ebensburg, to prepare the implementation plan for a joint interagency installation for the 111th Fighter Wing at the Willow Grove Air Reserve Station.

The plan, due to be completed in February 2008, will include a business plan outlining the operations

of the joint installation, options for the optimum installation footprint and consideration of numerous infrastructure and planning issues.

"I'm pleased that the implementation planning process has kicked-off in a positive manner and I'm delighted by the great participation of the legislative offices and the local redevelopment authority," said Major General Jessica

L. Wright, state adjutant general. "The preparation of the implementation plan is a major step in our efforts to transform all or part of the current Navy property into a model joint installation. In the future, the Pennsylvania Army and Air National Guard, other military organizations, federal, state and

See INTERAGENCY on page 2

SANDY HOG

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INTERAGENCY

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local government agencies and associated users will work side-by-side at Willow Grove to support vital national defense, homeland security and emergency preparedness missions."

As part of the planning process, Kimball will call on a stakeholders' advisory committee made up of representatives from the Horsham Local Redevelopment Authority, as well as the Navy, Air Force and state agencies. The first workshop for the advisory group is expected to be held in the next few weeks.

Consistent with a federal law passed in May, the Navy will transfer lands and facilities at Willow Grove that have been designated for the joint interagency installation to the Air Force. The Air Force, in turn, has agreed in principle to lease the installation to the commonwealth for operation of the joint installation.

For additional information about the joint interagency installation to be established at Willow Grove and the implementation planning process, visit the DMVA Web site at www.dmva.state.pa.us

The Sandy Hog is going electronic!

This issue of the Sandy Hog is the last printed issue that will be mailed to the homes of unit members and their families. Starting in January, an electronic issue will be emailed to personal email addresses and posted on the Hognet.

To receive the Sandy Hog by email, send your name and personal email address to: pa.111fw@pawill.ang.af.mil and put "Sandy Hog" in the subject line.

RED HORSE Sq

By Maj. David Kellner

111th Civil Engineering Squadron

You may have heard it was coming, but you might not know what it is. RED HORSE is a acronym for Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineering. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania petitioned for and received authorization for a full 404-person squadron. Half of the squadron is located at Ft. Indiantown Gap and the other half will be here at Willow Grove.

Started in 1965 in Vietnam, RED HORSE was a way to get more out of the typical engineering unit. Mortar attacks on Bien Hoa Air Base caused extensive damage to 45 aircraft, a parking apron and Petroleum Oil Lubricant (POL) facilities. This damage intensified the need for a greater organic heavy wartime repair unit. Secretary of Defense McNamara asked the Secretary of the Air Force if he had such a capability and if not could it be developed.

On September 23, 1965; fully self-contained units with their own equipment, supplies and identity in the field were developed to deploy worldwide. The first two RED HORSE Squadrons were designated the 554th (a Penny Short) and the 555th (Triple Nickle). Created by General William Meredith, known as the father of RED HORSE, these units began training at Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico. In February of 1966, the 554th deployed to Phan Rang, Vietnam and the 555th to Cam Rahn Bay, Vietnam.

These units were followed by the 556th, 819th, 820th and 823rd RED HORSE Squadrons. The 560th was formed at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. Their primary mission then was to train 2,400 new RED HORSE troops annually.

Today, there are 9 RED HORSE Squadrons including the one right here which is the 201st RHS Detachment



Maj. David Kellner

1. We are comprised of 204 personnel with 24 full-time and 197 part-time members. We meet up with our compliment from Ft. Indiantown Gap to make a full 404 person squadron.

RED HORSE carries numerous AFSCs within its ranks; everything from vehicle maintainers to services, from civil engineering craftsmen and security forces to supply and personnel specialists. RED HORSE must be self-sufficient as they are the first to go in and build up a base. They must protect themselves while there and reconstitute when finished. RED HORSE also has special capabilities ranging from the ability to make their own asphalt and concrete to well drilling, demolition and quarry operations, material testing and uniform building machines capable of creating a hangar in no time. One additional unique capability is the Airborne RED HORSE. These 23 HORSEmen are dropped to a site with several pieces of equipment to evaluate and repair an airfield so aircraft can land with the full team and supplies.

Soon you will see the red hats of the 201st RHS Det. 1 running around base, the familiar stickers and the Charging Charlie standing watch over the squadron. The RED HORSE mission is to go anywhere and build what is needed to support the AF mission of fly, fight and win.

They do it by one simple motto: "Lead, Follow or get the Hell Out of the Way". To the Horse...

Promotions

To Senior Master Sergeant

Teresa C. Mastracola 270th EIS
Edward M. Dimaio, Jr. 111th CES
Joseph A. Di Spaldo 111th SFS

To Master Sergeant

Abraham A. Wheeler 193rd FS
Heather L. Smith 111th CF
George A. Hamilton 111th SFS
Jeffery W. Maund 111th SFS
Richard P. Bolton 111th LRS
John J. Chapman 111th SFS
Jose M. Rodriguez 111th SFS

To Technical Sergeant

Eric T. Decker 111th LRS
Ronald C. Coen 111th LRS
Bradley M. Hughes 111th MXS
Jesse J. Painter 111th CES
Norman D. Testa 111th MOF
Boris Lapsker 111th MSF
Michael A. Link 111th MXS
Gregory A. Patrone 111th LRS

To Staff Sergeant

Daniel N. Kashdan 111th MG
Ryan D. Ward 111th MXS
Christopher Johnson 111th CF
Gordon K. Beecroft 111th MXS
Timothy L. Foxworth 111th CES
Anthony J. Pino, Jr. 270th EIS
Andrew M. Lamarra 111th CF

To Senior Airman

Matthew P. Shirk 111th CES
Devon M. Weston 111th LRS
Lauren A. Tran 111th SFS
Jehon N. Bendokas 111th MG
Brittany J. Ditro 111th LRS

To Airman First Class

Dimitrus C. Alston 111th MSF



Successful food drive

By Senior Master Sgt. John Lyon
111th Maintenance Squadron

The First Sergeants' Council would like to thank the 111th FW members who donated canned goods and non-perishable items for our food drive during the months of March, April and May.

On May 22, the first sergeants delivered over fifty bags of groceries to a local food cupboard that helps families who are in need. Rebecca Kelly who coordinates the food cupboard was very appreciative of our donation and said they help many different types of people especially those who work everyday or the elderly with no family close by. From time to time, families need help to get them through the week and the organization is there to help.

However, it would not work without donations from you. For those who donated, thank you for taking the time to bring something in. **There will be another opportunity to donate in December so please look for our donation boxes.**



Senior Master Sgt. John Lyon

111th SFS first sergeant position available

Applications are being accepted for a traditional guardsman first sergeant position with the 111th Security Forces Squadron.

Those who wish to be considered for an interview in the event that another first sergeant position opens in the near future (where we can accommodate a part or full-timer) please feel free to also submit a package.

Applications need to be submitted to SMSgt Jenkins and must include a military resume, awards and decorations printout from MPF, current PT test with run, contact information to include home work and cell phone numbers, civilian email and home mailing address.

Deadline for submitting an application is COB Saturday of December UTA. Interviews will be held during the January UTA.

Applicant must

- a) have three year retainability from the date of graduation of the first sergeant class
- b) hold the rank of Master Sergeant or Technical Sergeant who be promotable to the rank of Master Sergeant at the time the selection board is held
- c) minimum ASVAB scores of 41

for ADMIN or 62 for GENERAL

d) minimum score of 75 on ANG physical fitness assessment (must do the run, not the step test) and must adhere to the ANG pass standard while serving as a first sergeant

e) must agree to serve a term of no less than three years and no more than six years from date of assignment

f) must complete the SNCO academy (in-resident or correspondence) within three years from date of graduation from the First Sergeant Academy

g) must attend the First Sergeant Academy in the first year of appointment to the position, NO WAIVERS for any reason to include deployments, medical condition etc.

h) may not serve as first sergeant within a command structure where a family member is serving

i) if selected to be a first sergeant and receiving a retention bonus, payments will stop but no repayment of accrued money is required. Applicants in this situation need to check with the retention experts for more information.

j) first sergeants may be required to deploy on a mission to fill any Air Force wide vacancy

Anyone needing more details or with interview scheduling conflicts, please contact Command Chief Master Sgt. Michael Vasta personally at (215) 715-6585.

Change of Addresses

Personnel currently assigned to the 111th Fighter Wing can update their address or any other personal data at any time by visiting the Virtual MPF on the AF Portal at: www.my.af.mil. Once you're logged in, you'll find a link to the vMPF in the "Featured Links" section.

All others can email: pa.111fw@pawill.ang.af.mil or mail changes to the following address:

111FW/PA
1051 Fairchild St.,
Willow Grove ARS, PA
19090.

Name that plane

By Master Sgt. Ralph Perrie
111th FW Historian

This plane was developed for the US Army by the Curtiss Wright Aircraft Company. The first of its type was delivered to the military in 1940. It was flown by the 111th in 1942 and 1943. It was a two seat observation aircraft. For armament, it had one 30 caliber forward firing machine gun and a 30 caliber rear firing machine gun. It had one Pratt & Whitney 600 horse power radial engine. It's range was 700 miles and I could cruise at 192 miles per hour.

What is it?



HINT: Its nickname is synonymous with good night vision.

Answer on page 11

BRAC Action Group Formed

Effective Oct. 24, a BRAC Action Group was formed of 111 FW members in various capacities to assist wing leadership and wing members to help everyone with the road ahead. The group includes an Advisory panel, Union Association Leadership, an elected body as well as wing members.

The BRAC Action group will send information and published documents to wing members by email prior to each UTA. These documents will include questions asked by wing members with answers from the group and reference information when available. Questions will be marked "Pending" until the item is sufficiently researched and the answer has been reviewed by senior leadership.

Any wing member can ask a question by sending it to the "BRAC Action Group" email distribution list in the Outlook Global Address List. Additionally, these questions and other informational documents will be posted on the AF Portal in the 111 FW page and listed under "BRAC Action Group Information." The page will include the group's charter and mission statement, retirement, separation or transfer

information, future mission and hiring policy information. This and other information will be posted to help unit members make effective decisions that will affect their professional or personal decision making process.

Base Realignment and Closure Action Group

111 Fighter Wing Commander:
Col. Paul Comtois

Advisory Committee:
Lt. Col. Tony Carrelli
Capt. Christine Munch
Command Chief Master Sgt. Michael Vasta

Group President:
Chief Master Sgt. Alan Van Norman

Group Vice President:
Chief Master Sgt. Pete Santanello

Group Secretary:
Master Sgt. Michele Houston

Union Association President:
Al Kinney

Union Association Vice President:
Ed Rea

Union Steward
Tony Thalachira
Union Secretary
Josh Aduddell

Spokesperson:
Chief Master Sgt. Alan Van Norman

Members:
Chief Master Sgt. Rich Mertz
Chief Master Sgt. Larry Hallenbeck
Chief Master Sgt. Ross Barford
Chief Master Sgt. Stephen Rossi
Chief Master Sgt. Robert Williams
Senior Master Sgt. Donn Taylor
Senior Master Sgt. Steven Labarre
Senior Master Sgt. Alice Jenkins
Master Sgt. Maureen Santanello

HRO Representative (State):
Senior Master Sgt. Alice Jenkins
Asst Representative (AGR):
Chief Master Sgt. Robert Williams
Asst Representative (Tech):
Senior Master Sgt. Donn Taylor



Guardsmen return home safe from Iraq deployment

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Elisabeth Matulewicz
 111th FW Public Affairs

Approximately 200 guardsmen from the 111th Fighter Wing Pa. Air National Guard, returned home Sept. 19-23 after two and a half months of flying missions from Al Asad Air Base, Iraq.

The deployed pilots, maintainers and other support personnel were instrumental in the successful execution of critical operations, providing day and night air-to-surface attack support to coalition forces and conducting combat search and rescue operations in support of the war on terrorism.

The A-10s were also assigned to escort convoys and help seek out snipers, said Lt. Col. Howard Eissler. "We could see a decrease in the number of bad things happening just within the time we were there."

According to Capt. Andy Vaughan,



getting more troops out of Baghdad to conduct missions has helped track down more insurgents, locate places where roadside bombs are made, and overall, reduce violence.

Guardsmen were enthusiastically greeted by their family, friends and fellow unit members. Refreshments were graciously donated by the American Legion Police Post.



Let the games begin!

By Tech. Sgt. Elisabeth Matulewicz
111th FW Public Affairs

A crisp autumn day in October is perfect for a football toss, some golf putting and maybe even some.... Yahtzee? The wing held its first ever Sports Day Oct. 13 with a variety of indoor and outdoor team activities to test sports ability, thinking skills and just have some fun.

The primary purpose was getting everybody back together after multiple deployments and a long hot summer, according to Col. Paul Comtois, 111th Fighter Wing commander. "It's about getting to know ourselves better and taking some time to relax a little bit," he added.

Members were randomly placed into groups to participate in a variety of events. Team leaders kept the teams moving from sector to sector. The goal was to work as a team to support one another and earn points.

Indoor activities included Uno, Texas Hold Em, Spades, Suduko, Yahtzee, Darts, Bowling and Perfection. Outdoor challenges included relay races, crowded plank, tug-of-war, sumo wrestling, horseshoes, golf putting and chipping, push-ups, sit-ups, basketball, a wall climb and balloon toss.

At the end of the day, Team E2 emerged victorious followed by Team S in second place. Both were awarded trophies and in the lighthearted spirit of the day, the lowest ranking team was also recognized with a distinguished SpongeBob SquarePants trophy for their accomplishments.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon



Photo by Master Sgt. Patrick Cashin



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Elisabeth Matulewicz



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alvin Farrow

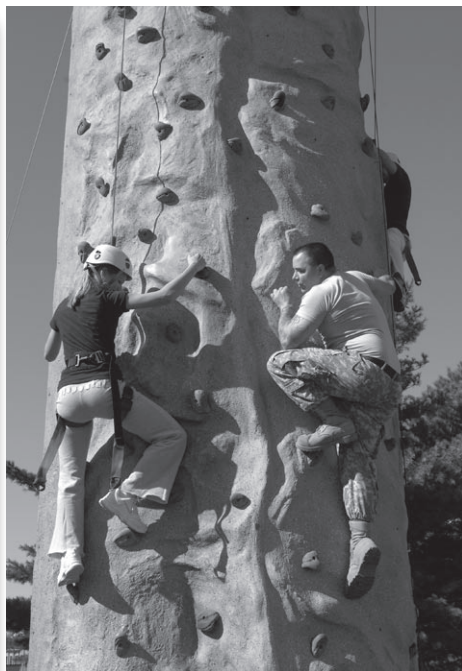


Photo by Master Sgt. Patrick Cashin



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Elisabeth Matulewicz



Photo by Master Sgt. Patrick Cashin



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alvin Farrow



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alvin Farrow

Message to families, community: We can't do what we do without you

111th Fighter Wing thanks supporters with Appreciation Celebration

By 1st Lt. Renee Lillis
111th FW Public Affairs

Airmen here at the 111th Fighter Wing know they have a lot to be thankful for. More than 200 recently returned home safely from an Iraq deployment, the fourth unit deployment to Southwest Asia since 2001. And a BRAC announcement that seemed to signal the end of the wing two years ago, now puts them at the center of an exciting new concept - a joint interagency base.

But the wing's guardsmen didn't gather Oct. 14 to celebrate their accomplishments. They gathered to thank the people whose unwavering support makes it happen. "We know we cannot do what we do without you," said Col. Paul Comtois, 111th Fighter Wing commander, to a crowd of Airmen, their families, employers, local business owners and other members of the community.

The event also recognized the total support provided by Pennsylvania elected officials including Governor Edward Rendell, Commander-in-Chief of the Pennsylvania National Guard; Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz, 13th Congressional District; and Representative Rick Taylor, D-Montgomery County.

Governor Rendell admitted that before entering office, being commander-in-chief of the Pennsylvania National Guard wasn't something he thought a lot about. But with BRAC, Hurricane Katrina support, regional floods and ongoing deployments overseas, "things turned out differently," he smiled.

He said each time Pennsylvania guardsmen serve at home or overseas, he gets hundreds of letters thanking him for the support they gave. "What



Photo by Master Sgt. Patrick Cashin

you do is so important, for so many reasons," Rendell said. "Whether it's homeland defense, natural disaster response or fighting terrorism...whatever you do your service is spectacular. Thank you, from myself and from the people of Pennsylvania."

The Governor went on to describe Willow Grove Air Reserve Station's future as a joint interagency base: a "combined effort we can all be proud of" and said that the base will continue to be a "good, working base that offers a sense of security to the people of Pennsylvania."

Schwartz also emphasized her gratitude, directing her thanks primarily to the families. "I keenly understand the sacrifices families make in service to their country," she explained. She recounted how at 5 years old, she became frightened when a stranger tried to pick her up from school one day. Her father, who served in the Korean War, had just returned home after two years

away from his family. Two years was long enough for the 5-year-old to forget who her father was and she remembered getting into the car reluctantly only after some convincing from her older brother.

Family members aren't the only ones who feel the loss when Airmen are called away to serve. More than two-thirds of the 111th Fighter Wing's Airmen are employed by civilian companies. And with the Guard and Reserve being relied upon more and more, the pace of activity is "right up there with the active duty," said Maj. Gen. Stephen Sischo, Deputy Adjutant General-Air for the Pennsylvania National Guard.

Through it all, support from family and friends has remained strong and the Appreciation Celebration was a tribute to their service. "You should be proud to stand up and say that you are a patriot and that you fight for your country as well," Sischo said.



Photo by Master Sgt. Patrick Cashin



Photo by Master Sgt. Patrick Cashin



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon

Alex Ryder, son of (Ret.) Col. Andy Ryder, enlisted in the 270th Engineering Installation Squadron here Oct. 14. Maj. Gen. Stephen Sischo and Ryder presided over the ceremony.

Are you a member of PNGAS/EANGUS?

The Pennsylvania National Guard Associations (PNGAS) and the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) are both associations working in your behalf to maintain and improve your military benefits.

For more information, visit www.pngas.net or www.memberconnections.com/eangus/

See your unit First Sergeant to join or renew your membership.

YOUR VOICE IN WASHINGTON

Name That Plane The answer is OWL

111th FW FRG Holiday Party Sunday Dec. 2 at 9:30 Dock Three

**Lunch served at 10:30
Santa arrives at 12:00**

Activities include: food, music, gifts, crafts, Santa and entertainment. Pa. Child Identification Program will be there.

Please note: Due to a large turnout, attendance is limited to 111th FW member, spouse or significant other, and children.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alvin Farrow

Family Day

By Tech. Sgt. Elisabeth Matulewicz
111th FW Public Affairs

The 111th FW Family Readiness Group held its annual Family Day celebration here on Oct. 14.

Family Day offered a wide variety of opportunities for family members and their families to have a blast. There was a car show, moon bounces, face painting, sand art and other activities to include a football toss and climbing wall.

Organizations such as USAA, VA, USO, ESGR, Military One Source and VFW distributed information and talked to members. Pa. Child Identification Program helped parents create a missing child kit.

Special guests included the Eagles Cheerleaders & Swoop, Philly Phantatic, Animal Junction, Lu Lu Shrine Klownz, Mad Dog, Soulman, River Shark, SoccoRoo, Elmo, Cinderella, Fire Chief Ploszay & Dalmatian and Ronald McDonald Magic Show.

Music was provided by (DJ) Senior Master Sgt. Dave Soldano and the Chain Band featuring Staff Sgt. Nick Parrella.

Food was provided by Dietz & Watson, the 111th FW and the USO.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alvin Farrow



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alvin Farrow



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon



Photo by Staff Sgt. Marie Harmon

CSAF's Vector: Airmen Warriors

By Gen. T. Michael Mosely
Air Force Chief of Staff

We are a Nation at war. As a Service, we've been in continuous combat for over 16 years. The strain is taking a toll on our people and our equipment, yet Airmen persevere, going above and beyond the call of duty every hour of every day. We have answered the Nation's call to defend America, its interests and ideals.

As Airmen, we have a unique warfighting perspective, shaped by a century-old quest to gain the high ground. The association between Air Force and flying is universal, inherent and undeniable. Yet, over the years, we have become so technically proficient and specialized that we have sometimes drifted from our core essence and let our functions override our mission-focus and warfighting orientation. We must never forget that our Air Force isn't just a conglomeration of diverse specialties, skill sets, or jobs. Ours is the profession of arms. We are Airmen Warriors - dedicated to flying, fighting, and winning.

As the youngest of America's five Services, our battle traditions are just a hundred years old. Nevertheless, we are heirs to a proud heritage. The Airman Warrior tradition was built by heroic visionaries and practitioners - such as Mitchell, Arnold, Chennault, Doolittle, LeMay, and Schriever - who charged us to believe in and advocate the value of air power for the Nation. They left us a spirit that fosters initiative, innovation, and forward thinking. They left us an institutional belief in leading by example, from the front, and assuming the full measure of risk and responsibility. They left us a heritage of valor, honor, service and sacrifice. This legacy - the contrails they left behind - defines who we are, shapes what we do, and sets the vector for our future. We stand on the shoulders of giants.

Since becoming Chief a year and a half ago, one of my top priorities has been to reinvigorate the warrior ethos in every Airman of our Total Force. To me, our warrior ethos is the warfighting-focused culture, conviction, character, ethic, mindset, spirit, and soul we foster in all Airmen. It's the pride in our heritage, the recognition that our Nation depends on us to dominate air, space and cyberspace, and our willing acceptance of the burden of those immense responsibilities. We're duty-bound to imbue our newest Airmen with these warrior virtues during basic training and foster them throughout every Airman's career.

Read the next two pages and consider them very carefully. The first page is a short "test" I want you to take. I know most Airmen will agree wholeheartedly with these statements about our mission and direction. But if you aren't in formation, get in position immediately. I need everyone in our Total Force on a single line-up card, thinking and acting with one mind, committed to and guided by these fundamental beliefs. The second page debuts our new Airman's Creed, which will replace all existing Air Force-related creeds. Its memorable and hard-hitting lines articulate these fundamental beliefs and capture the essence of our warfighting ethos.

As Airmen, we wage and win our Nation's wars, all the while fulfilling invaluable and unique roles and missions in peace, crisis and war. As Airmen, we build on our rich combat heritage while reaching toward an infinite horizon. And, as Airmen, we fly, fight, and win. Don't you ever forget it!

The Airman's Creed

I am an American Airman.
I am a Warrior.
I have answered my Nation's call.

I am an American Airman.
My mission is to Fly, Fight,
and Win.
I am faithful to a Proud Heritage,
A Tradition of Honor,
And a Legacy of Valor.

I am an American Airman.
Guardian of Freedom and
Justice,
My Nation's Sword and
Shield,
Its Sentry and Avenger.
I defend my Country with my
Life.

I am an American Airman.
Wingman, Leader, Warrior.
I will never leave an Airman
behind,
I will never falter,
And I will not fail.

Air Force Core Values

Integrity First
Service Before Self
Excellence In All We Do



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Edward Reich.

(Left) A first ever group reenlistment occurred during the ceremony.



(Right) Dan Onorato, Allegheny County Chief Executive, addresses the crowd.

Photo by Master Sgt. Stacey Barkey.

Flight of Freedom recognizes guardsmen's sacrifice

By Senior Master Sgt. Ann Young
171st ARW Public Affairs

The culmination of countless sacrifices of both the Airmen of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard and their families was honored in Pittsburgh Sept. 9 with the annual Flight of Freedom Honors ceremony.

The ceremony honors members of the PaANG and their contributions to

the nation's defense. It is also an opportunity to highlight outstanding individuals who have gone above and beyond their traditional duties.

The Pennsylvania Air National Guard Hall of Fame was established nearly 20 years ago to recognize individuals who have made meritorious

contributions to the status, operations, prestige or mission of the PaANG or demonstrated exceptional bravery or gallantry in the protections of life or property while serving in the PaANG.

This year's Hall of Fame inductees were Col. Jim Herron who retired from the 112th Air Operations Squadron in State College, PA and Chief Master Sgt. Bill Schempp who retired from the 171st. In addition to these worthy inductions, Brig. Gen. Herb Hurst of state headquarters was retired during the ceremony.

The ceremony began with comments from County Executive Officer Dan Onorato and concluded with comments from Brig. Gen. Uptegraff.



Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Elizabeth R. Allen

111th Medical Group supports humanitarian mission onboard USNS Comfort

Senior Airman Belitza Hernandez, 111th Medical Group, cares for a patient recovering after surgery onboard the USNS Comfort Oct. 3. Hernandez was attached to the post anesthesia care unit there as part of a four month humanitarian deployment. The USNS Comfort is providing medical treatment to patients in several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Airmen and political activities

AFI 51-902 outlines the dos and don'ts for service members

Courtesy of Air Force Roll Call Online

A popular misconception about service members is they can't participate in political activities. On the contrary, Airmen have a great deal of flexibility in how they engage in the democratic process. Airmen can vote and express personal opinions on political candidates and issues. In most cases, they can sign petitions and write letters to the editor as a private citizen and they can contribute to political organizations or committees favoring a particular candidate or slate of candidates. They can also attend political meetings or rallies as a spectator or join associations and attend meetings when not in uniform and not on duty.

With the political season heating up, Airmen and civilians may also want to discuss politics with co-workers. If you do so informally, keep it profes-

sional and ethical. There are strict rules on use of official authority or influence in this area to avoid improper interference in elections and solicitation of votes or fundraising. The workplace is not an unrestricted forum and everyone needs to use good judgment and understand the limits on political activities.

Air Force Instruction 51-902 Political Activities by Members of the US Air Force lists the "dos" and "don'ts" for engaging in political activities. Airmen must: (1) avoid partisan activities when acting in an official capacity, (2) only express personal opinions on candidates and issues and (3) steer clear of any conduct which implies official Air Force endorsement or representation. Other points to remember:

Airmen can't wear political buttons on their uniform at any time, nor can

one wear a bracelet while in uniform that espouses a certain creed or motto, with the exception of the POW bracelet. Airmen may not have large political banners on their vehicle; however, they can display a bumper sticker or similar device. Airmen are not permitted to speak at or serve in an official capacity as part of a partisan club, organization or rally.

Airmen should always keep themselves informed about the candidates and issues which directly affect them, just be sure to follow the proper guidelines when it comes to political activities. Seek guidance from your local Staff Judge Advocate at (215) 443-1858 if you have questions or visit Air Force Roll Call Online at: www.af.mil/library/viewpoints/

**PENNSYLVANIA AIR NATIONAL GUARD
111TH FIGHTER WING (ACC)
1051 Fairchild Street
Willow Grove ARS, PA 19090**

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To the Family of: